

Appl. No.: 09/856,082
Grp./A.U. 1712

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Amendment to the Claims:

Claims 1-10: (Cancelled)

Claim 11: (Currently amended) A process for imparting lubricity to an aqueous drilling fluid used in geological exploration comprising:

(a) providing an aqueous drilling fluid;

(b) providing a lubricant component containing a partial glyceride of ~~predominantly unsaturated fatty acids having from about 16 to 24 carbon atoms~~ derived from a tall oil fatty acid; and

(c) introducing the partial glyceride into the aqueous drilling fluid.

Claim 12: (Previously presented) The process of claim 11 wherein the partial glyceride has a pour point of up to 10°C.

Claim 13: (Previously presented) The process of claim 11 wherein the partial glyceride has a pour point of up to 0°C.

Claim 14: (Cancelled)

Claim 15: (Previously presented) The process of claim 11 wherein from about 0.5 to 5% by weight of the lubricant component, based on the weight of the drilling fluid, is introduced into the drilling fluid.

Claim 16: (Previously presented) The process of claim 11 wherein the drilling fluid contains in excess of 90% by weight, based on the weight of the drilling fluid, of water.

Claim 17: (Previously presented) The process of claim 11 wherein the drilling fluid contains in excess of 10% by weight, based on the weight of the drilling fluid, of a water-insoluble oil.

Claim 18: (Previously presented) The process of claim 11 wherein the partial glyceride contains less than about 15% by weight, based on the weight of partial glyceride, of triglycerides.

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Claim 19: (Previously presented) The process of claim 11 wherein the partial glyceride contains less than about 5% by weight, based on the weight of partial glyceride, of triglycerides.

Claim 20: (Previously presented) The process of claim 11 wherein from about 1 to 3% by weight of the lubricant component, based on the weight of the drilling fluid, is introduced into the drilling fluid.

Claim 21: (Previously presented) The process of claim 11 wherein the lubricant component further comprises an anionic surfactant.

Claim 22: (Previously presented) The process of claim 21 wherein the anionic surfactant is selected from the group consisting of sulfonates, sulfates, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 23: (Previously presented) The process of claim 21 wherein the anionic surfactant and the partial glyceride are employed in a ratio by weight of from about 1:10 to 1:20.